

Principals' job action options rejected

The fall Representative Assembly has voted by a narrow margin not to recommend to the Annual General Meeting a scheme which would give principal teachers, in recognition of their legal

responsibilities, the opportunity of deciding to participate or not participate in any withdrawal of service.

This was the most contentious proposal in the recommendations of the

Task Force on the Membership of Principals in the BCTF, which was presented to the RA together with Executive Committee recommendations.

Proponents of the task force's pro-

posed job action procedure urged it as an essential compromise on a controversial issue, while opponents rejected it as creating a special category of members.

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BCTF Newsletter

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President tells RA:

Funding, rights' battle continues

The election is over but the fight must go on for the federation's two major goals of adequate funding for education and improved bargaining and professional rights for teachers.

That was the message BCTF President Elsie McMurphy brought to the Representative Assembly in Richmond on November 7, 1986.

She told the meeting that the great efforts teachers put into the Campaign for Change during the provincial election did succeed in informing the public and the candidates about the problems facing public education, and in creating more positive public opinion — with a recent poll showing 79 per cent of Socred voters and 94 per cent of NDP voters favour more money for education — but the challenge was in translating this into improvements for the education system.

"How do we change a province that has one of the lowest levels of financial support for education into an Ontario," she asked, "a situation where a Liberal-NDP coalition votes more money for education and the opposition Conservatives criticize its insufficiency?"

She pointed out that Ontario — which currently spends \$4,543 per public school student compared to B.C.'s \$4,081 — intends to increase public school spending by 5 per cent and post-secondary by 7 per cent, a move denounced by the Conservative opposition as not enough.

McMurphy urged local associations to maintain constant contact with their

MLAs to keep them informed about the education system and make them aware of teacher opposition to "such poten-

tially damaging notions as the voucher system, increased private school funding, the county system, or any plans to

tamper with the nature and structure of our organization."

One major change teachers do want, she said, is "the right to full, free collective bargaining. These rights, available to all other Canadian teachers and recognized by the ILO as a fundamental freedom, will be won by B.C. teachers — either through consultation and co-operation or further confrontation, tumult and distress. It seems clear to me that B.C. teachers cannot wait another four or five years in hopes of electing one of the three opposition parties that did support this normalization of teacher bargaining."

The first test of Premier Bill Vander Zalm's promised open, consultative government, she said, will be if he involves the education community in discussions about the composition, mandate and terms of reference of the announced commission on education.

Another test, she said, will be in how the government "deals with its pork barrels" — the \$532 million in so-called special accounts — such as the Fund for Excellence.

"This fund, as everyone but the public knows, is old money recycled into fodder for news releases and all done in secret by the cabinet," McMurphy said. "So whether you view it with affection or distaste, the Fund for Excellence is neither 'open' nor 'honest' and thus, by Mr. Vander Zalm's own definition, should have no place in his plans. The money should be put back into the various programs from which it was taken and

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In an Executive Committee presentation, architect Tony Green points out some of the features of the condominium development planned for BCTF land.

Carpenters' development plan accepted

Housing slated for BCTF land

The BCTF is to enter into an agreement with the carpenters' union pension fund development company for a \$6 million joint residential development of a block of federation-owned property in Vancouver.

The plan calls for Western Housing Development Corporation, an offshoot of the Carpenters' Welfare and Pension Plan, to build a 63-strata-unit condominium complex on about an acre of land west of the BCTF building, bounded by 6th and 7th Avenue and Cypress Street. Western Housing is to pay the BCTF the full appraised value of the land, \$2.255 million, and to bear the \$3.7 million building costs of the project. Any profit from the sale of the units is to be shared.

The plan, which is intended to achieve a socially responsible development and a good economic return to the federation, was approved by the Representative Assembly at its meeting in Richmond on November 7.

Debate at the RA focussed on the

process of selecting Western as the developer and on whether the federation would be receiving the best possible return for its investment in the land, which had been acquired about 20 years ago for possible BCTF building expansion but remained largely undeveloped.

Marion Runcie, speaking for the Executive Committee's Building Subcommittee, told the RA that the subcommittee had been investigating the future of the property for two years. In May, following a presentation by the subcommittee, the Executive Committee had authorized formation of a joint BCTF/WHDC committee to examine the joint development idea; in October the executive endorsed the agreement proposal for submission to the RA.

Runcie said the subcommittee had considered such options as commercial joint development, land rental, sale of the property, holding it for investment, development in conjunction with the BCTF office, cooperative housing and

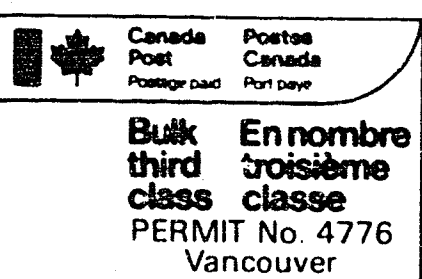
joint development with WHDC. But she said it was decided that Western best met the objectives of the committee which were to:

- obtain the full dollar value out of the property;
- act in a socially responsible manner;
- ensure union labour is used;
- enhance the neighbourhood with a quality project;
- have input and control over any development on the site.

Some local association representatives questioned whether other developers were approached and whether other development plans had been considered.

"We had a real estate agent go around and talk to the developers," said Runcie. "We did not like their answers about what they would be prepared to offer us, what they would be prepared to do, and then we started looking at other alternatives."

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IF UNDELIVERED, return to 2235 Burrard St., Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9

Medical coverage sought for exchange teachers

The BCTF will make representations to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health to extend Medical Plan coverage to exchange teachers in B.C.

The RA made this decision after being told that foreign exchange teachers are not covered by the plan and often get into financial difficulty because of health expenses.

Eugenia Materi (Cranbrook), who raised the matter, pointed out that the problem is most acute with British teachers (26 of the 82 exchange teachers now in B.C.) who earn only about half, \$19,000 Canadian, of what their Canadian colleagues earn and are faced with paying their own medical insurance while B.C. exchange teachers in the U.K. are given free medical coverage.

"The insurance they must purchase before they can come on exchange to B.C. costs \$664 for 12 months, which is an incredible amount of money for a British teacher," she said. "The British teacher already is out of pocket \$46 for an x-ray, \$74 for a medical, \$50 for a work permit in order to come to British Columbia for a year."

Materi said the Cranbrook local and school board have combined to share equally the cost of providing medical insurance to the three exchange teachers and their dependents in the district, but the problem needs a comprehensive, province-wide solution.

Letters

Leave life and death issues out of BCTF

I have taught most of my life in B.C. and appreciate all improvements brought about by the BCTF. I had always felt that compulsory membership was desirable and essential because the whole membership benefited. But now that the executive takes it upon itself to advocate* the right of choice to kill another human being before birth, I feel that the teachers in favor of life should not be forced to pay fees to bring this about.

Besides the crime of abortion, the thousands of children already sacrificed would fill classrooms, giving jobs to teachers. The balance between the young and the aged would be maintained and the current movement towards the desirability of terminating the lives of the aged under certain conditions, not necessarily by the choice of the victims (that's us guys) will become less popular. Please leave life and death issues out of the BCTF. Then compulsory membership would be fine with me.

*Yolande Lepine
Retired Teacher
West Vancouver*

Member objects to BCTF belonging to association planning abortion clinic

I must protest most strongly the very liberal interpretation that the BCTF executive has made concerning federation policies 34.11, 42.23 and 42.27, policies that deal essentially with the issue of abortion on demand.

My concern about this issue has been increased considerably by a report that appeared in the *Vancouver Sun* on October 17, 1986. It was stated therein that Vancouver will have an abortion clinic within one year, backed by money from community groups. These community

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Gary Robertson (Greater Victoria) pointed out that two Australian teachers on exchange in his district have not been given medical coverage while their B.C. counterparts in Australia have been. "It seems to me a basic injustice in the system when it can be afforded to our people going there and not for their people coming here," he said.

Alan Paterson (Vancouver administrators), who is also president of the BCTF Assistance Society, told the meeting that the society often gets applications for financial assistance from exchange teachers because they do not have adequate health coverage. "That exchange should be a very positive experience and in many cases it turns out not to be," he said.

BCTF seeks elimination of compulsory retirement

The BCTF will ask the provincial government to abolish the requirement for mandatory retirement as prescribed by Section 147 of the School Act.

The RA made this decision following debate about the professional, social and economic implications of eliminating the requirement for teachers to retire at age 65. The debate took place in the context of a member's legal action to avoid being forced to retire.

The RA decision is in keeping with policy statement 27.07 that there be no compulsory retirement age.

groups, all members of Concerned Citizens for Choice on Abortion (CCCA), include the New Democratic Party, the B.C. Federation of Labour, the B.C. Teachers' Federation, the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, and the YWCA.

It appears, therefore, that the BCTF is not only seeking to remove abortion from the Criminal Code and to support the issue of abortion on demand, but the executive has also arbitrarily decided to associate its members with the CCCA and is ready to spend its members' money to create a free-standing abortion clinic. Such clinics are in violation of the Criminal Code of Canada. Do the policies listed above give the federation the authority or the mandate to force its members to act in defiance of Canada's Criminal Code? Indeed, can the members of the federation legally give such a mandate to the executive?

Much debate has been heard about the issues of basic individual rights and freedom of choice. Yet, by its decisions and actions, the BCTF executive has eliminated my freedom to choose whether to associate or not to associate with a group such as the CCCA. I do not choose to support, either in principle or financially, the objectives or actions of the Concerned Citizens for Choice on

Majority vote to decide start, end of job actions

Local or provincial job actions can only be started — and ended — on the basis of a majority vote of the members concerned, the RA has decided.

The RA took this decision after local association representatives pointed out that the federation had a gap in policy on this issue. The move also resulted from long-standing dissatisfaction with the fact that the 1983 Solidarity withdrawal of services was ended without a vote by BCTF members.

RA appreciates involvement in executive leadership report

Local Association Representatives expressed pleasure at the opportunity to begin discussions formulating the 1987 Executive Leadership Report.

In wide-ranging and often self-critical small group discussions at the November Representative Assembly delegates identified what they considered to be the key issues. These were maintaining public support for public education, support for a Royal Commission, bargaining and professional rights, necessary salary increases, strong expressions of concern about class size and membership unity, involvement and morale.

The representatives set those issues in the context of how much support existed for them at this time and how we could

The recommendation adopted by the assembly specified that the membership vote on job actions be taken in local association meetings. It stated: "That a decision to begin a job action shall be made by majority vote at a general meeting or meetings of the local unit concerned or by majority vote of the BCTF taken at meetings in local associations. Similarly, the decision to end a job action once undertaken shall be made by a majority vote at a general meeting or meetings of the local unit concerned or by majority vote of the BCTF taken at meetings in local associations."

build support for them both in the membership and where appropriate with the public.

Local associations were urged to discuss the issues so as to be able to provide feedback to the December 5 executive meeting. From there the report will be discussed at the January RA and will ultimately be included in the Reports and Resolutions booklet to the 1987 AGM.

This is further refinement of the process followed during the past two years to get as many members as possible involved in the process of determining the directions that the federation should take in the coming year.

No BCTF money given to pro-abortion group

Ms. Krische's letter raises a number of points that require a response.

I disagree that the BCTF policies mentioned deal with the issue of abortion on demand. The BCTF policies referred to, 34.11, 42.23 and 42.27, do deal essentially with a woman's right to make decisions about her reproductive life. In particular, Policy 42.27 — *That the CTF should seek to have abortion removed from the Criminal Code of Canada*, is a pro-choice, not pro-abortion, policy which supports the right of women to make a personal choice about abortion, without committing a criminal act.

In fact, the majority of Canadians agree with the BCTF position. In 1982, Gallup poll results showed that 72 per cent of Canadians support a woman's right to decide if and when to bear a child.

More specifically, the letter raises concerns regarding our association with the group, Concerned Citizens for Choice on Abortion. BCTF policies are the same as at least two of the stated aims of CCCA — to remove abortion from the Criminal Code, defend a woman's right to choose to have an abortion, and to legalize free-standing abortion clinics.

BCTF policies do provide direction for the Executive Committee when it receives requests from groups such as CCCA for support or endorsement. However, the assumption that the BCTF is providing financial support to CCCA for the clinic is erroneous. In fact, we are not providing any funding. The newspaper article states that the Vancouver clinic will be "backed by money from community groups." The article goes on to list the BCTF as member, but does not, indeed, state that BCTF is providing financial support. The BCTF has never given money to CCCA for this or any other project. In fact, the BCTF was incorrectly reported to be a member of CCCA. The BCTF is actually a CCCA endorser.

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Elsie McMurphy ... a light point in a serious RA speech.

McMurphy attacks BCSTA "internship" as "slave labour"

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the cabinet should get out of local decision-making."

She turned to criticize recent proposals by the BCSTA.

"In two recent reports, they've suggested a system of what is essentially slave labour — exploiting the unemployed teacher population in this province by hiring certificated teachers, and calling them interns, at \$18,000 a year," she said. "The other proposal would destroy our organization by removing a sizeable portion of our membership, the administrators, and splitting — as if they're mutually exclusive — splitting our bargaining and professional responsibilities into separate organizations. If that's not contracting out and union-busting, I don't know what is!"

McMurphy also noted that preliminary WLC survey results indicate some slight overall improvement in class sizes this year over last, an improvement which has come at a cost to local homeowners in increased residential taxation. "Non-residential taxes have been reduced and virtually none of the extra money came from the provincial government," she pointed out. "The local taxpayer cannot continue to foot the whole bill and therefore the ball is still in the government's court."

But she said there are still major problems as 41 per cent of kindergarten classes have over 20 children, half of all Grade 3 classes have more than 25 students, almost 25 per cent of secondary Social Studies and 20 per cent of English have more than 30 — and there are 128 classes with more than 40 students.

"These figures clearly indicate that we're still in the class size swamp, far from dry ground, and here we have the alligators — the superintendents — coming at us with a suggestion that we hurry up the process for firing teachers," said McMurphy. "With workloads like these, I'll say the process will be speeded up: more and more teachers will simply be burned out, overstressed and frustrated at their inability to do the job they know they can and should be doing. These same alligators, who should know the principles of professional development and what research says are the best approaches to improving teaching effectiveness, are also suggesting some cockamamie scheme to institute compulsory recertification."

"Need I repeat my warning about the challenges ahead?"

Peace educators — now officially a PSA

The B.C. Teachers for Peace Education is now officially the newest federation PSA.

The Executive Committee has approved the constitution for the new PSA, completing the final formality for its establishment. Teachers for Peace Education currently has 140 members and is planning a major peace education conference in February.

"Critical time" for BCTF unity

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The task force was appointed in April 1985 to make recommendations concerning the role and responsibility of principals following a number of disputes between the B.C. Principals and Vice-Principals' Association and the federation. The disputes generally concerned whether principals were receiving sufficient service from the federation and whether their role and legal responsibilities were being taken into consideration by federation policies.

There was no RA debate on the fundamental policy statement on the status of principal teachers to be recommended to the AGM, as the task force and the executive favoured almost identical wording. The task force proposed that it read:

That principal teachers are teachers first; thus their primary responsibility lies with the teaching profession, as does that of any teacher.

That principal teachers have some specific legal responsibilities in addition to those of other teachers.

The executive recommends that the second paragraph read:

That principal teachers have some specific legal responsibilities different from those of other teachers.

But there was extensive debate as to what should be recommended to the AGM about the role of principal teachers in job actions. The task force recommended the following scheme:

That principal teachers be given the opportunity to decide, on a local level for local withdrawal of services and on a provincial level for provincial withdrawal of services, if they will participate in the withdrawal of services before any recommendation is debated at a general meeting.

That, if principal teachers decide to participate, they be expected to comply with the majority decision of the membership.

That, if the principal teachers decide not to participate, they remove themselves from the debate and the vote on the withdrawal of services. Should the job action result in a loss of salaries for the members, the principal teachers be required to forward to the local association salary and allowances earned during the withdrawal of services.

That, when principal teachers are involved in a withdrawal of services, local associations establish guidelines for ensuring the safety of the children and the security of the schools.

The assembly, however, also had before it for consideration a motion from the executive that the RA not support this task force recommendation.

In introducing the topic for discussion, Colin Scott, task force chairperson and member of the executive, said that the task force "is unanimously convinced that principals quite properly should be members of the professional organization of all teachers" and that its recommendations represent the views of a large majority of the membership.

"It is my opinion that there would be agreement among those concerned members if this report and its recommendations were approved substantially as they stand," he said, but he added that possibly the task force's job action recommendation needed further study, with the topic being referred to an outside expert for an independent opinion.

"We're still at a critical point," Scott, a Prince George principal teacher, pointed out. "Time may seem to have dulled some of the edges of the disagreement, but it's my opinion that this is not the case, the edges are as sharp as they ever were. I'm sure I speak for all members of

the task force when I say that I sincerely hope that this report will help to restore that measure of unity that we are, and have been for a long time, in danger of losing."

Dean Paravantes, president of the BCPVPA, told the RA that his PSA was not completely happy with the task force report but urged its acceptance as a step in the right direction. He called on the assembly to adopt the task force's recommendation on job action procedure. This was necessary to head off divisive pressures, he argued, referring to the fact that a group of dissatisfied principal teachers had formed a separate administrators' association under the Society Act and that a BCSTA proposal for a separate principals' organization was attracting some support.

Opposing the task force's recommendation, Maureen MacDonald (VESTA) said that the AGM following the 1983 strike had made it clear that there should be only one category of members with equal rights and responsibilities, but this would be changed if the task force proposal was accepted. "The principal teachers who would be given the opportunity to decide on withdrawal of services would be given then a special category of membership, which I do not believe they deserve," she said.

Bob Dearn (Windermere) said that as an executive member of the BCPVPA and a principal teacher he had joined colleagues on the picket line in 1983, but he said that principals were more severely "roasted" for their actions by parents, news media and the school board with letters of reprimand, than were teachers.

Noting that as a strong BCTF member for 32 years he felt he could participate in some job actions and others he could not, Dearn suggested that if the executive's motion was endorsed it would lead to the government withdrawing principals from the BCTF, "which would upset me greatly."

Explaining the executive's objections to the task force's proposal, Moira MacKenzie (Second Vice-President) suggested that it could lead to a situation in a strike where, with some members designated as "in", the impression could be created that the schools were somewhat open and result in school board management directing principals to perform other functions deemed necessary to keep the schools somewhat open. "We really felt that that was setting ourselves up for a difficult situation which would in fact lead to longer, less coherent job actions," she said.

MacKenzie added that the executive also objected to the idea of effectively allowing a PSA to operate as a separate local on some issues. "What that [recommendation] seemed to say is that members of the PSA could choose to say that we will be with you at the end of the job action for the gains," she said, "but we can opt out of the struggle that gets us those gains."

Also opposing the task force's pro-

posal, Richard Hoover (Executive Committee) argued that the claim that principal teachers have special legal responsibilities was "a red herring" and that he could find nothing in the school Act and Regulations giving them special responsibilities beyond those of ordinary teachers in job actions.

"When you hear people say that principals have special legal responsibilities, you have to remember that that's their own particular opinion," said Hoover. "The real reason is that some people don't want to participate in job action. It's not that they are legally prevented from it, they just don't want to."

Taking the opposite view, Anthony Toogood (Victoria) pointed out that both the recommendations of the task force and the executive stated that principal teachers had legal responsibilities different from those of other teachers. He referred to the requirement to ensure the safety of children and the security of the school.

The task force recommendation, he maintained, would provide a procedure that allows for the different responsibilities. "I don't see this as a way of making them [principal teachers] different," said Toogood. "I see this as a way of recognizing that there are some responsibilities that are different and therefore providing an option as to which route that group chooses to take."

In the end, the RA decided to adopt the executive Committee's recommendation that the task force's proposal on job action not be supported. The recommendation was carried in a recorded vote by 266 to 238 votes.

The assembly went on to adopt recommendations urging that:

- prior to a withdrawal of services, local associations make specific provisions in regard to ensuring the safety of the children and the security of the school plant;

- supervision of instruction be a continuing process obviating the need for regular formal teacher evaluation;

- locals negotiate agreements with their boards under which professional competence is to be assumed and formal evaluation only occur when that assumption is questioned;

- local associations negotiate with their boards a process for involving school staff and community representatives in principal teacher appointments.

The Executive Committee subsequently adopted two further recommendations from the task force. One called for statement I.A.23 to be amended to read:

That personnel supervising instruction, either at the district or school level, should average at least one-fifth time in the classroom over a five-year period.

The other called for deletion of statement 12.07 which sought a School Act amendment to "provide that pupils' attire be left to the discretion of parents, not determined by school policy."

Court splits Charter case

The question whether the Charter of Right's equality section applies to a differentiation based on being a teacher will be heard as a pre-trial point of law, the B.C. Court of Appeal ruled November 7.

BCTF lawyers had opposed this process on legal grounds and because of the possibility of major delay in the proceedings, which now appears likely.

Mr. Justice William Esson noted that the government position on teacher bargaining rights appeared to be: "however important and fundamental the rights

may be, however great the practical effect and the extent of the detriment, however unreasonable and unfair it may be, the [teachers'] case is not within" the equality section.

He ruled that claim could be determined prior to trial. He expressed "some doubt whether the preliminary procedure will prove more effective" in hearing the case, but held that he would not substitute his discretion for that of the Chief Justice of the lower court who had ordered the separate point to be argued.

It was not known at press time when the legal point would be argued.

BCTF to get \$2 million for land

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BCTF Treasurer Derek Holden added that the inquiry did not identify any active union developers — one was mentioned, but the company subsequently went bankrupt.

Pat Brady (Prince George) objected that there was only one bidder and one proposal on the table.

"If our purpose is to sell the property to get \$2 million, if we want to make some money on our investment — and that's what it is, an investment from our members — let's advertise that it is for sale," said Brady. "We may get considerably more than \$2 million. And if that's our objective, to get other than appraised value, or market value, I think it should be open to competition."

He added that he thought it was "nonsense" to try to sell the land and then expect to exert control over its development.

Jim MacFarlan (Burnaby administrators) disagreed, arguing that the plan on the floor met both the federation's economic and social goals.

"The bulk of the land was bought in the late 1960s in order to expand the building," said MacFarlan. "If we sell the property for the \$2 million we will have made a very handsome profit over that period of time in the increase in capital value of the property. The federation has been on record in all facets of our activities as being a socially responsible organization. Frankly, it discourages me to hear Mr. Brady say that we should sell it and we don't give a damn what they do with it, because for us to have built on the property next to us by some sleazy two-bit developer who would perhaps pay us \$2.1 million and put housing or other structures which are not socially accept-



In RA debate, Jim MacFarlan (Burnaby administrators) argues that Western Housing Development's plan meets BCTF's economic and social goals for its land.

able in terms of the needs of the community, frankly is not in keeping with the way this organization has run."

A proposal to postpone a decision until there was more information and alternative schemes available for consideration was rejected, the meeting opting for the WHDC plan.

Earlier, the architects for the scheme, Joe Wai and Tony Green, described the proposed development to the RA with the help of slides and plan drawings. Taking advantage of the natural slope of the site, the wood frame condominium buildings would be built on three levels to give maximum views of the mountains and skyline. The development, which would feature one bedroom, one bed-

room-and-den, two-bedroom and three bedroom units, would include underground parking and open landscaped space between the buildings. It would retain and renovate two existing BCTF-owned old apartment buildings on the west side of the site, which the city has classified as potential heritage buildings. Also as part of the scheme, a two-level parking garage with 31 spaces would be built to replace existing parking lost to the development at an estimated cost of \$200,000 to the federation.

On the financial side, the federation would receive an initial payment of \$255,000 and would hold a \$2 million first mortgage on the property during the 16-month development and sale phases, receiving interest at prime plus 1 per cent. Any profit on the sale of the units would be shared approximately two-thirds to Western and one-third to the BCTF, which could earn the federation a further \$200,000 to \$400,000.

AGM resolutions must be in by December 15

Local association and other resolutions for the Annual General Meeting (see Statement 2.C.04, p. 29 Members' Guide) must be received in the federation office by **December 15**.

Once resolutions are received, a check is run with appropriate committees to see if the issue is under study and whether or not the committees will be bringing forward recommendations. Committees are also asked to provide comment on resolutions for the information of AGM delegates.

If two or more local associations submit similar resolutions, effort is made to develop a consolidated resolution that the locals can endorse jointly.

The time available for this process is just over a month. The Reports and Resolutions book will be mailed out by the end of January.

The procedure for "late" resolutions is found in Standing Rule of the AGM 6.C.1, page 35 of Simplified Rules of Order book. The Executive Committee has to rule prior to the AGM on whether or not a late resolution fits the criteria given in Standing Rule 6.C.1. The last full executive meeting before the AGM is February 13/14, 1987. The last opportunity to have an executive ruling on a later resolution will be at their pre-AGM meeting held on Saturday, **March 14, 1987** at the Hyatt Regency.

Questions on resolutions should be directed to T. Hutchison, Government Division, BCTF.

News roundup

Jailing of Fraser March, Nfld. gov't workers leader, provokes BCTF protest

A letter from the BCTF expressing outrage at the action of the Newfoundland government which led to the jailing of Fraser March, President of the Newfoundland Association of Public Employees, will be sent to Premier Brian Peckford.

The RA gave strong support for a motion calling for such a protest letter and a letter of support to March. Fraser March, a former teacher, was jailed October 24 for four months and sentenced to two years probation for disobeying an anti-picketing injunction granted during the NAPE strike last spring.

Describing March's jailing as "grossly unjust and an affront to all working people in Canada," the National Union of Provincial Government Employees praised the NAPE leader for exercising "a basic democratic right" in leading his members in protesting an unfair law.

The strike came about because of unresolved contract items and the 1983 Newfoundland Bill 59 which allowed government to declare up to 49 per cent of the bargaining unit as essential services. According to NAPE, the government, by declaring this proportion essential, had effectively taken away the right to strike. All essential services had to be agreed upon before a strike could take place. NAPE recognized the need to designate essential services, but objected to the process and the required numbers, and as there was no agreement the strike was technically illegal.

The strike has since been settled. Newfoundland teachers condemned the government's actions and gave NAPE \$600,000 in support.

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Support given to striking IWA and Gainers' workers

The BCTF Executive Committee has voted to give financial support to workers involved in two long-running strikes.

The executive agreed at its October 30 meeting to have the federation donate \$1,000 to the strike fund of the International Woodworkers of America (B.C. division) and \$1,000 to the national strike fund of the United Food and Commercial Workers' Union (Gainers' workers). It was argued that the donations were warranted because the issues involved in the two strikes had implications for all organized employee groups and because they would help maintain the federation's relationship with other workers for the time when teachers need allies.

B.C. and Quebec sign new pension agreement

A new pension agreement was signed between B.C. and Quebec in December 1985.

Although the new agreement does not guarantee that B.C. or Quebec will recognize full pensionable service rendered in the other provinces, it is an improvement over the present agreement, i.e. more pensionable service will probably be recognized for pension purposes when teachers move between these provinces than is currently recognized.

To be eligible, a teacher must apply to come under the agreement before the later of **December 4, 1988** and the date which is three years after the date contributions were commenced to the new pension plan. In addition the teacher must meet the other eligibility requirements.

Former Quebec teachers are urged to contact the Superannuation Commission at 544 Michigan Street, Victoria, BC V8V 4R5 for full details.

Vacancies

Certification Advisory Committee

Three BCTF representatives are sought for this ministry of education committee. The term of office is two years. This committee has the following functions:

Review appeals and advise the ministry about certification decisions;

Discuss and advise universities and other agencies about implications for certification of university teacher education programs;

Review decisions and advise the minister about decertification of teachers;

Advise the minister about certification policies and procedures;

Enquire about and investigate specific aspects of certification practices and procedures.

Applications on BCTF curriculum vitae forms should be submitted to the BCTF office by **January 5**. Appointments are scheduled for the January 9-10 Executive Committee meeting.

Status of Women Committee

Due to a resignation, there is one vacancy on the BCTF Status of Women Committee. Application deadline is **January 5** with the appointment scheduled for the January 9-10 EC meeting.

For more information or for BCTF curriculum vitae forms, please call Jacquie Boyer at the BCTF office. Many local association presidents and offices also keep a supply of CV forms on hand.

Letters

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As Ms. Krische points out, the BCTF is a democratic organization. The BCTF policies mentioned have been debated on the floors of several AGMs, and each time debate occurred a majority of the body of the AGM reaffirmed their support for these policies. In fact, the BCTF Executive Committee has not included members in actions of the CCCA, in the membership of the CCCA, or used any membership fees to promote activities of the CCCA.

I trust that the BCTF position on this matter has been clarified.

Elsie McMurphy
BCTF President

Tips sought on creating materials by computer

I would like to hear from any teachers using PCs for creation and storage of teaching materials. I would also be interested in knowing which word processor program they are using. Depending on the latter there are a number of useful devices one can use for accelerating and reformatting materials, including foreign language applications. I would also like to hear from any ministry department or school district resource centre having an exchange facility of disk materials, and whether such exchanges are available by modem. This letter was written on Word Perfect.

Graham Milne
Brackendale Jr. Secondary
Brackendale

Principals' views stated well by George Buckley

George Buckley said it very well. His letter in the October issue, tactful and eloquent, states precisely what many principals feel — the result of years of experience at the local and provincial level.

W.H. Manke
Principal
Sunset Elementary
Port McNeill